



Family Liaison Office

Choices for High School: The International Baccalaureate (IB) and Advanced Placement (AP) Programs

Both the International Baccalaureate (IB) and Advanced Placement (AP) programs give high school students an opportunity to pursue college-level studies while still in high school. Depending on the college they attend, these courses can lead to advanced placement (skipping entry-level courses) or sometimes even receiving college credit for the coursework completed under these programs. The AP courses are accepted at virtually all U.S. colleges and universities, while the IB program has more limited acceptance within the U.S.

The AP program was begun in the U.S. to offer more challenging courses to capable high school students. An introductory college level course is offered followed by an examination in May. Students are rated on a five-point scale on the examination which is administered by the Educational Testing Service. Many overseas and American high schools participate in this program. Classes can be taken in just one subject or in a variety of subjects. Website: <http://www.collegeboard.org/ap/>

The IB program was designed through an international cooperative effort and is based in Geneva, Switzerland. This program offers an academically challenging curriculum emphasizing the philosophy of learning and the integration of disciplines for the last two years of high school. It can be supported by a curriculum beginning as early as elementary school. Because it is a comprehensive two-year program it can be difficult to transfer during that last two years and complete the IB diploma at a different school. Individual tests, however, can be taken for courses completed even if the full diploma program is not completed. Exams are completed in May with all exams centrally evaluated to set criteria by international examiners. Website: <http://www.ibo.org>